

V. REMARKS

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 because the Amendment: a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; b) does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the Amendment amplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; and c) places the application in better form for appeal, should an Appeal be necessary. The Amendment is necessary and was not earlier presented because it is made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. The amendments to the subject claims do not incorporate any new subject matter into the claims. Thus, entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Chikaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,149,757) in view of Stuhldreher (U.S. Patent No. 4,943,609). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Chikaki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,149,757) as modified by Stuhldreher (U.S. Patent No. 4,943,609 as applied to claims 1 and 3-5 and further in view of Custer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,857,775). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a laminating apparatus for laminating a solar battery panel that includes an upper chamber and a lower chamber which are partitioned by a diaphragm, a heater board provided in the lower chamber and a diaphragm which partitions the upper chamber and the lower chamber. Claim 1 recites that the diaphragm is capable of freely expanding for pressurizing the object to be laminated which is mounted on the heater board. Further, claim 1 recites that the diaphragm is constituted of a single layer of butyl rubber. Additionally, claim 1 recites that the solar battery panel has a structure with strings sandwiched with a filler between a reinforcing material and a cover glass and the filler is ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) resin.

It is respectfully submitted that that none of the applied art, alone or in

combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 1 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that the solar battery panel has a structure with strings sandwiched with a filler between a reinforcing material and a cover glass and the filler is ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) resin. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

In the present invention, the diaphragm is constituted of a single layer of butyl rubber.

Further, the solar battery panel as an object to be laminated has a structure such that the strings are sandwiched with a filler that is EVA resin between a reinforcing material and a cover glass.

When lamination is performed, peroxide is generated from the filler (EVA resin) in the solar battery. The butyl rubber barely reacts with peroxide and deteriorates very slightly. Thus, the lifetime of the diaphragm becomes longer.

Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for

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allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 26, 2008

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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal
 Petition for Extension of Time (one month)

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